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City of Bellingham

May 22, 2019

Whatcom County Council
311 Grand Avenue, Suite 105
Bellingham, WA 98225

RE: Resolution Reducing Incarceration of Young Adults

Dear Whatcom County Council Members,

At the May 20 meeting of the Bellingham City Council, we reviewed and considered a draft resolution provided by Barry Buchanan in support of reducing incarceration of young adults. The Bellingham City Council voted unanimously at that meeting to send this letter of support asking you to approve that draft resolution.

Bellingham City Council members April Barker and Dan Hammill participated, along with Barry Buchanan and Whatcom County Health and Human Services Director Anne Deacon, in a year long national Policy Academy focused on reducing young adult incarceration. The draft resolution to support youth and young adult resilience in efforts to reduce exposure to the criminal justice system is one outcome of the Academy.

The City of Bellingham strongly support's the County's efforts to support those community initiatives currently in operation focused on reducing the exposure of youth to the criminal justice system and to work across all sectors of local government, education and social services as appropriate to offer prevention, intervention, treatment and support to youth and young adults. We also support efforts to improve data gathering and analysis and to build cultural competencies in staff and processes to eliminate racial disparities. Additionally, we support your efforts to prioritize policy development and funding that invest in growing healthy and resilient youth through prevention and early intervention programs. Thank you for undertaking this important work for our community.

Sincerely,

Kelli Linville, Mayor

Dan Hammill, City Council President

Hannah Stone, Council Justice Committee Chair